

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2022

Courant Community

MANCHESTER

‘Stupid Cupid’ ball hits the stage



David Carlson, founder of Oddball Newt Productions, said the seventh annual event could prove to be the biggest yet. See page 3. COURTESY PHOTO

LOCAL NEWS



JRego's Gathering Place is in Meadowview Plaza, in Ellington. SUSAN DUNNE/HARTFORD COURANT

JRego's Gathering Place now open

JRego's Gathering Place offers the flavors of Mexico, Greece, Italy, China, Brazil and the United States. **Page 8**

LOCAL NEWS

New distribution facility proposed

There is a pretty hot industrial market now in the region, and certainly in Manchester. **Page 5**

LOCAL NEWS

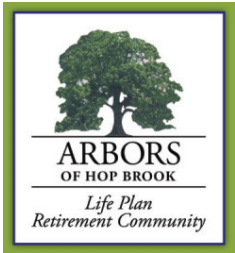
Problem section of I-84 discussed

The 'Tolland Triangle' was the topic of discussion at an informal meeting with U.S. Rep. Joe Courtney. **Page 7**

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Domestic Abuse Agency program taking place

VERNON — STAFFORD SPRINGS — The Women's Ministry Group of First United Methodist Church, 8 Church St., invites adults to a presentation from the Domestic Abuse Agency.

Learn what the agency has to offer in programs for children, teens, and people of all ages. The program will take place from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. Saturday, March 5. Light refreshments will be offered. Call 860-684-2468 with questions.

Glastonbury Centennial Lions Club hosting pasta dinner

GLASTONBURY — The Glastonbury Centennial Lions Club is holding a curbside pick-up pasta dinner from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Saturday, May 7, at First Church of Christ, 2183 Main St.

The menu features pasta with home-made Bolognese sauce, Caesar salad and a dinner roll prepared and donated by Salad Bar Glastonbury, and a chocolate brownie. The cost is \$10 per meal. Tickets must be purchased in advance.

A portion of proceeds will fund the Glastonbury Centennial Lions Club scholarship for student residents in Glastonbury. Email GlastonburyLions@yahoo.com to purchase tickets. For more details, call President Christine Kurtz at 860-597-3530.

Those who cannot attend but still want to support the Lions may donate a meal to emergency first responders. Club members will deliver the meal.

South Congregational Church presents Lenten Prayer Cross

EAST HARTFORD — South Congregational Church invites the community to stop at the Lenten Prayer Cross displayed on their front lawn at 1301 Forbes St. Call 860-568-5150 or visit southucc.org for more information.

Members, strangers and friends are welcome to visit the cross, offer a prayer, and tie a ribbon to the structure as a visual representation of their Lenten journey.

People may bring their own ribbon or

choose one from a basket of donations. All are welcome to participate in this transformational activity of renewal, sacrifice, fellowship and hope. The cross will be in place from Ash Wednesday, March 2, through Easter Sunday, April 17.

Brunetti accepting applications for scholarships

EAST HARTFORD — Johnson Brunetti Retirement & Investment Specialists is seeking graduating seniors from East Hartford High School (Class of 2022) who have been actively involved in community service and plan to attend a Connecticut state college or university (including community college and UConn) to apply for the Johnson Brunetti Scholarship for Community Service.

Scholarship recipients will each be awarded \$1,500 to be used to support their education. The deadline to apply is Friday, April 15.

Visit johnsonbrunetti.com/scholarships for more information, including the required criteria and Scholarship Application Form.

Program on Civil War experiences being held

SOUTH WINDSOR — The Civil War experiences of two South Windsor men will be discussed by their local relatives at Wood Memorial Library & Museum, 783 Main St., at 2 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 27.

Local accountant Robert Starr and Civil War reenactor Frank Niederwerfer are the guest speakers for the program, co-sponsored by the South Windsor Historical Society and Friends of the Wood.

Niederwerfer is a long-time member of the 14th Connecticut Volunteer Infantry, Co. G and a descendant of Oliver Dart, Jr., who enlisted in the 14th Regiment August 1, 1862, fought in the battles at Antietam and Harpers Ferry, then was seriously wounded at the Battle of Fredericksburg in December. He underwent painful facial operations for several years, worked on the family farm here, and died in 1891.

Starr came across a diary of his great-grandfather Pierre S. Starr in the attic of the old family home here several years ago and had it published in 2018. Unable to get a medical post in the east at the start

of the Civil War, Pierre became a front-line surgeon in the 39th Ohio Volunteer Infantry including its role in General Sherman's "March to the Sea." At the end of the war, he returned to Connecticut, marrying Louise Green Tudor of South Windsor.

This month's talk is one of a series being held at the library/museum. Admission is \$7 general admission and \$5 for members of the Friends or historical society.

Visit www.southwindsorhistory.org or www.woodmemoriallibrary.org for more information.

Check 'Em Out Book Club meeting at library

MANCHESTER — The Check 'Em Out Book Club at Manchester Public Library, 586 Main St., will meet in-person at 6:30 p.m. Monday, March 14.

The club will discuss The Women's March by Jennifer Chiaverini. Copies of the book are available for checkout at both library buildings. No registration is required for this free in-person program. For more information, visit <http://library.townofmanchester.org> or call the library at 860-645-0821.

Recycling program taking place virtually

BOLTON — "Are We Recycling Right?" will take place via Zoom at 6:30 p.m. Monday, Feb. 28, via the Bentley Memorial Library.

Learn about recycling including what goes in the bin, what stays out, and more with Sherill Baldwin from DEEP. This program coordinates with the library's February recycling display by the Bolton Conservation Commission. Call the library at 860-646-7349 to register and receive the Zoom link.

Adult education citizenship classes taking place

MANCHESTER — The Bangladesh Bhaban Community Center, 9 Delmont St., is offering adult education citizenship classes for people interested in becoming U.S. citizens. The course is run by the Manchester Adult & Continuing Education.

The current three-month session began in January with 17 students. The next session is being scheduled now. Prospective

students wishing to learn how to prepare for the American citizenship test can contact Nira Bahauddin at 860-218-3922 or Harun Ahmed at 860-906-6870 for more information.

The classes will prepare Bangladeshi and other immigrants for the American citizenship test. Also taking place are English as a Second Language (ESL) and Adult General Education (ABE/GED) classes soon, all at the Bangladesh Bhaban Community Center.

A Journey to the Potter's House returns to Rockville

ROCKVILLE — Jacob's Well Coffeehouse, downtown Rockville's monthly Christian nightclub, will feature an encore presentation of "A Journey to the Potter's House" on Friday, March 4. Doors will open at 7 p.m., and the program will begin at 7:30 p.m. The event will be held at Union Church, 3 Elm St. Admission is free and open to the public. Dress is casual.

Through a powerful and unique 90-minute live presentation, Dr. Michael Ferris will share through scripture and pottery demonstrations how God is the Potter and people are the clay. His presentation will be projected on the large sanctuary screens to help everyone see what he is doing.

The presentation will also be livestreamed on YouTube and rebroadcast on the Community Voice Channel. For details, visit JacobsWellCoffeehouse.com or call 860-871-6500. In case of bad weather, a cancellation notice will be posted on WFSB-TV 3.

Ellington kindergarten registration beginning in March

ELLINGTON — Online registration will begin on March 1 for all Ellington children entering kindergarten in September 2022. To be eligible for registration, a child must be five years old on or before Jan. 1, 2023.

The Ellington school district requires documentation for proof of age to complete registration. Parents or guardians must also provide documentation of residency in Ellington.

Parents can navigate to the district website registration page at <https://www.ellington-tv.com>. **Turn to Community News, Page 4**

Courant Community

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To submit Good Neighbor items, birthday greetings, engagement or wedding announcements, email community@courant.com.

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Scan with your smartphone to shop at the Hartford Courant Store mobile website.

'Stupid Cupid' ball coming to Manchester Feb. 26-27

By Steve Smith
Courant Community

MANCHESTER — The seventh annual Stupid Cupid Steampunk Ball is coming to Manchester, on Feb. 26 and 27, and an entire weekend of events are planned.

The name "Stupid Cupid" is a play on the idea that the event, although having a Valentine's Day theme, is never held on Valentine's Day. The ball is a production of Oddball Newt Productions, in coordination with Silk City Steampunk, according to the event's coordinator David Carlson, founder/owner of both organizations, as well as 12 Months of Steampunk.

Forty-five vendor tables will be filled with crafters of steampunk accessories, jewelry, clothing, precious stones and toys, as well as photographers, authors, and others.

The series of events within the event begins on Saturday with Splendid teapot racing, in which remote-controlled chassis racers have ornamental teapots as bodies.

"It sounds strange, but it's rather fun," Carlson said.

Other day-long activities include a roving sea shanty chanteuse who will be making the rounds, and an exhibition featuring George Eastman, founder of Eastman Kodak, who helped bring roll film into the mainstream, back in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Panel discussions include the topics of intuition, "Love in Fiction and Steampunk," "Language of the Fans and Flowers" - about the art of holding and folding hand fans, "Frugal Formalwear" - steampunk costuming on a budget, "Influence of Victorian Fantasy," "History of Absinthe," and "War of the Worlds - What if it really happened?"

An authentic British tea will be served, with three different sittings.

One of the signature events will be a meet-and-greet with featured U.K. band "Victor and the Bully," during which the band and guests will be peeling potatoes.



Baron Von Zipple (left) and Professor Adam Smasher, of the band The Eternal Frontier, share a moment at a previous ball with Linda-Jean LaCosaire. COURTESY PHOTO

"Peeling potatoes is kind of a thing with them," Carlson explained. "Peelers and potatoes are going to be provided. Those potatoes will be later used, the next day, for home fries for tomorrow's brunch."

The Main Stage will feature a fashion show, with New York designer Kristen Costa, who specializes in Haute Couture, who will be premiering a new line of clothes called "In A Strange Land."

The stage will also have performances from musical artists Adelaide Punkin from Torrington, Frenchy and the Punk from New York, leading up to headliners Victor and the Bully.

On Sunday, the day begins at 10 a.m. with brunch (separate ticket needed) provided by Oak, Ash and Thorn Tavern. Frenchy and the Punk will be temporarily renaming themselves "Frenchy and the Brunch" and providing musical entertainment.

Doors for the remaining events open at noon on Feb. 26. Featured again will be the teapot races, sea shanties and the Eastman exhibit, as well as board games and Dungeons and Dragons.

Sunday's panel discussions' topics include Victorian mourning traditions, Victorian textiles and the Industrial Age, The Druid's Deadly Darlings, and In a Strange Land.

Featured on the Main Stage on Sunday will be the band Francois Never Told Me, at 1:30 p.m.

Carlson said the event is the biggest one he puts on, and has grown each of its seven years.

"We're hoping to turn Connecticut, which is known as the land of steady habits, into the land of steamy habits," he said.

The Stupid Cupid Ball takes place at Cheney Hall in Manchester on Feb. 26 and 27, starting at 11 a.m. on Saturday and noon on Sunday. The event is family-friendly and fun for all ages. Attendees are welcome to wear steampunk attire, but "muggles" (people wearing everyday attire) are welcome.

"People who don't have an outfit don't have to feel pressured to come with one," Carlson said, adding that his co-organizer Bridget Rodriguez, has been essential in the planning.

"She makes sense of everything," he said.

For more information, visit the "Stupid Cupid Steampunk Ball VII" page on Facebook. Tickets are available through Eventbrite, or at the door.

ORTHOPEDIC UPDATE

"Dr. Daniel is highly qualified for hip and knee replacement surgery"

— ROBERT McALLISTER, MD

CHAD DANIEL, MD
Orthopedic Surgeon

ROBERT McALLISTER, MD
Orthopedic Surgeon

Chad Daniel, MD recently joined Hartford Orthopedic Surgeons and has unique fellowship training in advanced robotic joint replacement surgery. He is passionate about customizing the right treatment plan for his patients, whether it be physical therapy, medications, or joint replacement surgery. **For an appointment call (860) 525-4469.**



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Community News

from Page 2

publicschools.org/parents/registration, beginning March 1.

Arts Center East hosting exhibit, workshop

VERNON – Arts Center East, 709 Hartford Turnpike, presents the following programs. Visit <https://artscentereast.org/> or call 860-871-8222 for more information.

The fiber arts exhibit runs from now through Feb. 26 and is free and open to the public. Gallery hours are Thursday through Saturday from 1 to 5 p.m. Visit www.artscentereast.org/fiber-arts for more information or to view the exhibit online.

The 11th annual Artist Members Exhibit will take place March 5 to 26 and is free and open to the public. Visit www.artscentereast.org/artist-members-exhibit for more information. The gift shop will be reopened during this exhibit to showcase more from artist and artisan members.

The submission deadline for Still Lifes & The Legacy of Charles Ethan Porter is March 13. Exhibit dates are April 1 to 30. Visit www.artscentereast.org/still-lifes for more information.

The exhibit will feature contemporary still lifes alongside artwork and information about 19th and early 20th century Rockville artist, Charles Ethan Porter. Porter was a renowned still life artist in the 19th and early 20th Century. He lived in Rockville for most of his life. Porter not only studied art at the National Academy of Design in New York City, he was one of the first Black artists to exhibit there.

The exhibit submissions are open to artists 18 years and older working in acrylic, pastels, oil, watercolor, charcoal, and colored pencil. Subjects can vary from traditional still life or memento mori composi-

tion (flowers, fruit, timepieces, etc.) to more contemporary or surreal compositions.

This exhibit is made possible by the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving Vernon Greater Together Community Fund.

Pastel and the Still Life Workshop with discussion of the still life works of Charles Ethan Porter will run from Saturday, April 30, and Sunday, May 1, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., with a break for lunch.

Cost to attend is \$120 and the deadline to register is April 25. Class is limited to 10 students. Students are asked to show proof of vaccination upon registration. All visitors to Arts Center East are asked to wear a mask while in the building. All levels are welcome.

Author talk, felting program taking place

ENFIELD – EAST GRANBY – The East Granby Public Library, 24 Center St., is hosting the following events. Call 860-653-3002 or visit <https://high.eastgranby.k12.ct.us/> for more information.

An author talk with Peter Floyd Sorenson will take place at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 29. He will discuss his book “Hazard Powder, the Powder Hollow Explosion of 1913,” a redefinition of the people and the history behind the industry that carved the town of Hazardville out of the belly of Enfield.

This event will be in-person but also available via Zoom. Register online at www.egpl.org or call 860-653-3002.

Needle Felting Baby Chicks will take place from 6 to 8 p.m. Monday, April 4, in the large conference room. Participants will complete one baby chick during this class.

Cost is a \$10 fee for all materials and supplies. Space is limited to eight participants. Visit www.egpl.org to register and stop in the library to make your payment or you can pay via Venmo @EastGranbyPublicLibrary. Registration is not confirmed until payment is made.

Windsor Locks Library hosting program on Medicare

WINDSOR LOCKS – The Windsor Locks Library will host Medicare and Beyond, a virtual program via Zoom on Wednesday, March 9, at 5:30 p.m.

The father/daughter team of Lou and Jessica Pelletier will sort through the parts and review the pros and cons of Medicare Supplement Plans and Medicare Advantage Plans. Learn about IRMAA, Medicare Savings Programs, a Medical Power of Attorney, and how to protect your assets from nursing homes without having Long-Term Care Insurance. Join us if you are a

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HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Courant Community will print a current birthday photo FREE in one edition. Submit a current photo and 15-word description including name, age, birthday, town, your name, daytime phone number to community@courant.com or to Courant Community, P.O. Box 569, Hartford, CT 06141. Please submit three weeks in advance to avoid disappointment.



Happy 10th Birthday, James (2/17): “To our favorite hockey goalie. Have an amazing birthday! Love, Mom, Dad, and Jillian.”



Happy 6th Birthday, Thomas (2/14): “Our little valentine. You light up our world. We love you more! Love, Mimi and Nonno.”



Happy 2nd Birthday, Patrick (2/29): “Your smile lights up our hearts and makes every day a blessing. Mommy and Daddy.”



Happy 70th Birthday, Dan (2/22): “Wishing you many, many more! Enjoy your crosswords. Love and cheers! Your family.”



Happy 3rd Birthday, Violet (2/22): “You are forever our sweet pea! Love you! Mommy and Daddy.”



Happy 85th Birthday, Barbara (2/22): “Love and appreciation from your entire family!”

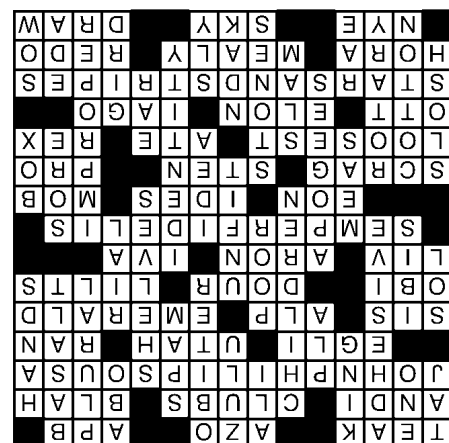


Happy 9th Birthday, Addilyn (2/28): “You are the sweetest and kindest granddaughter any Papa could have. Papa.”



Happy 3rd Birthday, Sage (2/23): “To our sweet little Sage. You light up our world. Love you lots, Mimi and Nonno.”

CROSSWORD ANSWERS FOR TODAY'S PUZZLE



New distribution facility proposed in Manchester in continuing ‘super hot’ market, planning director says

By Jesse Leavenworth
Hartford Courant

MANCHESTER — In 2019, Manchester planning and economic development director Gary Anderson referred to “a pretty hot industrial market now in the region and certainly in Manchester.”

“Any space that’s available, we’re seeing interest in development or expansion,” Anderson said at the time.

The market is “still super hot,” Anderson said in response to questions about a proposed commercial distribution building on Parker Street.

“We are seeing lots of demand for distribution centers — transportation/warehousing,” he said. “This is one of those and we recently approved another that’s very similar. I’m hearing they are building these on spec (without a signed tenant) because they are so confident in the market.”

1055 Crossroads LLC is seeking approval from the planning and zoning commission to build a 42,785-square-foot commercial distribution building on a vacant 4-acre lot at 700 Parker St. The company hawks the property on its website as close to I-84 with surplus parking available to lease.

After a revaluation last year, industrial real estate values in Manchester increased 13.46%. The town already is home to the 2 million-square-foot Winstanley Logistics Center, where tenants include Amazon and Stop & Shop parent Ahold Delhaize. In neighboring East Hartford, a Massachusetts developer is proposing to build a warehouse and two

manufacturing centers at Rentschler Field.

In landing warehouse-based businesses, Connecticut has been capitalizing on access to the populous Northeast — within 500 miles of 30% of the U.S. population, state economic development officials have said. The state also is benefiting from Interstates 84, 91 and 95 and flat land available for huge warehouses.

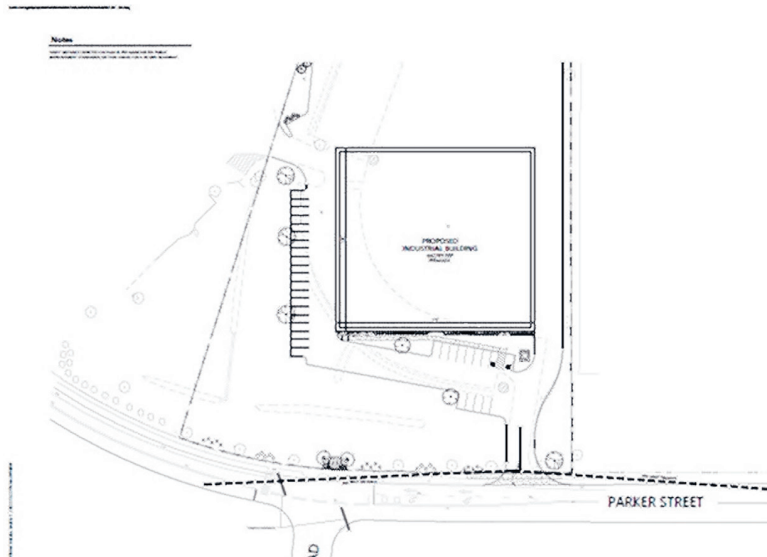
Amazon, in particular, has been building a massive presence in the state, including a \$200 million facility in Windsor. In January, Naugatuck and Waterbury officials announced that a 150-acre industrial park straddling the town line could draw Amazon, adding to the state’s growing network of hubs that are key to online shopping and next-day delivery.

Across the nation, mitigation of rising transportation costs will continue to drive industrial demand for the foreseeable future, leading to continued rental rate growth, strong leasing volume and low vacancies, according to real estate broker CBRE.

The Silverman Group, based in Basking Ridge, New Jersey, is the real estate developer behind the pending Manchester application. In 2019, the company purchased 700 Parker St., along with several other industrial properties in town for about \$13 million.

The company portfolio — silvermangroup.net/portfolio — shows the wide extent of its holdings in Manchester. A company representative could not be reached.

Jesse Leavenworth can be reached at jleavenworth@courant.com.



Site plan for a proposed commercial distribution center in Manchester. CONTRIBUTED

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From gasoline to groceries, Connecticut consumers buying less

By Stephen Singer
and Kenneth R. Gosselin
Hartford Courant

Inflation over the 12 months of 2021 was 7.5%, which means an item selling for \$100 in January 2020 could have been had last month for \$107.50.

But economics isn't that simple.

The cost of everything has increased at the fastest rate since 1982. Yet prices don't rise uniformly.

Food prices jumped 7% and the price of clothes was up 5.3%, according to the U.S. Department of Labor. Price increases were slightly less in the Northeast, with inflation overall at 6.3%. The price of clothes was up 3.2% and consumers paid 6% more for food.

But that's small fries compared with the price of energy, which soared 27%, driven by the rising cost of fuel oil and home heating. That pushes up costs elsewhere, accounting for activities as varied as trucks delivering food to supermarkets to electricity that runs U.S. factories, computers and home appliances.

"Energy is used in everything we do in the economy," said Brian T. Kench, dean of the Pompea College of Business at the University of New Haven. "A lot of the action is around energy prices."

At the South End Wellness Senior Center in Hartford, seniors who have long retired and are now living on fixed incomes say they have felt the pain of higher prices, everywhere from the gas pump to the grocery store.

"I put in half a tank, and it cost me \$35," said Estelle Freeland, who lives in Newton. "It usually cost me \$15 and no more than \$20. I was just out of it when I saw the sign that said the cheapest was \$3.42. I see it at the pumps. I see it at the stores."

Hartford resident Willie Mann said he's driving less to conserve gas. He's also started doing something he hasn't done before: stopping by a local social services agency that provides food, to supplement the produce, cereal and bread that he buys.

"I always went straight to the regional market at times or to Price Rite and ShopRite and that would be it," Mann said.

Hartford's Beulah Williams said she and her husband Carl are spending \$20-\$40 a week more on food since prices started climbing. The couple is eating less meat so when there is a big sale, they stock up and load up their freezer.

"It's significant when you are on a fixed budget," Williams said. "And the toilet paper. That's gone sky high. I'm afraid people are going to start hoarding again."

The price for a new car was 12.2% higher and used cars and trucks cost consumers a significant 40.5% more in January than January 2021. Fewer new cars have been on the market because of computer chip short-



East Windsor, Ct. - 02/16/2022 - A customer in an East Windsor grocery store pays for groceries with inflation rates approaching 7.5%. Photograph by Mark Mirko | mmirko@courant.com. **MARK MIRKO / THE HARTFORD COURANT**

ages and supply chain bottlenecks caused by factory closings during the pandemic. As a result, demand soared for used cars.

The causes of inflation have been known for a while. The pandemic is partly responsible, causing shortages in items as varied as cat food to semiconductors that are used in nearly all products that require power.

Demand by consumers working from home soared as supplies were crimped, creating classic conditions for inflation.

Adding to that, Congress and President Donald Trump and later, President Joe Biden, approved trillions of dollars in federal spending to keep the economy from sinking under the weight of high unemployment and lost business and tax revenue.

Another textbook cause of inflation emerged: "More money chasing a fixed number of goods," Kench said.

Economist Donald Klepper-Smith said inflation would be even worse, but the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics has changed how it calculates the Consumer Price Index, which is the basis for measuring the pace of inflation.

Components do not include housing, which has posted red hot sales, but a rental

equivalent instead, he said. And taxes are not included, he said.

The result is that the federal government understates inflation, Klepper-Smith said. The reason, he said, is that the government saves trillions of dollars in transfer payments such as Social Security checks that are higher with cost-of-living adjustments pegged to the Consumer Price Index.

"The CPI does not measure the cost of living," Klepper-Smith said. "It measures the cost of surviving. It understates inflation as consumers are experiencing it."

Kench sees a path to a return to a more normal economy with inflation tamed. Pumping more oil will help push down energy prices, though it will likely generate opposition from clean energy advocates.

The supply chain will slowly be repaired and current high demand will wane, he said.

For the moment, however, Kench said, "Inflation is real. It's sustained. It could be self-reinforcing."

Biden is now trying to remedy the inflation situation with 72 distinct initiatives — from new rules for cell phone repairs to regulations on meatpacking to more merger reviews. But some business groups dispute

the fundamental premise that competition has faded within the U.S. economy and they are prepared to challenge the administration's new initiatives in court.

At the senior center in Hartford, Mann, a retired case manager for the Hartford Board of Education, said he remembers the long gas lines in the 1970s, another era of runaway inflation.

"We had gas shortages, we had long lines," Mann said. "We don't see that now. But what we do see are gas prices going up."

Mann had hoped that President Biden's decision to release a portion of the strategic petroleum reserves would help, but it didn't.

Living with price increases, Freeland said she is glad she has her family to fall back on when she needs it.

It is upsetting, however, to hear people paying thousands of dollars for a ticket to the Super Bowl when so many struggle to buy the necessities, Freeland said.

"I just feel like we're in a chaotic situation," Freeland said. "It just doesn't seem to be ending. It just seems to be going higher and higher."

Associated Press contributed to this report.

GOOD NEIGHBOR

Your reader-to-reader column

FREE

MEDICAL EQUIPMENT: Three walkers, one manual wheelchair, three pairs of crutches, one shower chair, one shower bench. All in really good condition. 860-849-0704.

DOUBLE HORSE TRAILER: Big dent on top. Possibly good for storage or scrap. Tires holding air. Text 860-798-9133.

HP SCANNER: Scanjet 2200C. Great for use with older computers. 860-659-9409.

SOFA: Great condition, flowered upholstery. Must pick up. 860-368-9540.

CAT ITEMS: Three cat beds and a litter box. 860-678-8608,

TV TABLE: Oak with glass door. Excellent condition. Ron at 860-918-3892.

EXERCISE EQUIPMENT: Nordic Track ski exerciser. Weslo Elliptical. Excellent operating condition. Ron at 860-918-3892.

QUESTIONS

METAL SHELIVING: Need metal shelving for an art project. 860-951-0095.

GREEN TRIPE: Seeking a farmer who can sell green tripe to feed to my dogs. 860-267-6040.

MEMORY CARDS: Looking for someone to donate or sell cheaply the following: A CF card or CF32 card for use in an older A85 canon camera or any SanDisk card, only 2.0 gigabytes. 860-648-9147.

TABLET ASSISTANCE: Seeking someone to set up tablet and phone. Will pay. 860-666-5699.

FOUND: Baseball Card in protective plastic cover found in Marlborough, Connecticut in 2014, unintentionally tucked away, and recently uncovered. Send an email to cs-137@outlook.com with an accurate description of the card, and we'll get it back to the owner.

SEEKING TO RENT: At least 1,500 to 2,000 sq. ft. of cold storage. Rocky at 860-490-3816 or 860-872-6269.

DRONE FOUND: Vicinity of Elm St & Courtney Drive, Rocky Hill. Text with description for return. 860-402-2655.

FOUND EYEGLASSES: Eyeglasses found on Carriage Drive, Manchester. 860-646-4242.

CPAP Machine: Senior in need of an inexpensive but working CPAP machine. 860-512-0684.

AUTO MECHANIC: Seeking auto mechanic to repair pickup truck. Am senior citizen, phone with reasonable price. 860-796-6132.

FURNITURE: Seeking a light wooden chest having five drawers in good condition. Call after 5 p.m. 860-665-0141.

LOST BRACELET: Bracelet lost at ALDIs of Rocky Hill by carriages. It was a birthday gift. Call if found. 860-778-8556.

PUZZLE SWAP: Will meet half way if too far to go. Have 20, most new. 860-568-1378.

SEEKING: Small boat trailer for a 12 boat, will buy. 860-741-2633.

NECKLACE FOUND: On Carillon Drive, Rocky Hill. Call with description for return. 860-965-6672. Messages will be returned.

SNOW SHOVELING HELP: Senior looking for an individual to shovel out parking space and clean off car after snow storms in Collinsville. 860-305-6701.

CAR: Seeking automobile to help out with transportation in 2022. Elderly with low Social Security. 860-515-1488.

LAPTOPS: Collecting used or new laptops from kind donors. These laptops will be donated to school kids in Ghana. Contact Ben, 423-676-8815.

NAUTICAL ROPE: Looking for free 1/2- or 3/4-inch nautical rope for DIY projects. 860-490-8956.

PROPANE: Seeking propane Salamander. Will pay a reasonable price. 860-749-2190.

LAWN MOWING, SNOW REMOVAL: Does anyone know of someone who mows grass and/or plows snow? 860-289-0101 after 5 p.m.

CAR: Seeking a donated good running car for elderly person in Putnam for doctor appointments. Cannot afford one. 508-335-5060. Leave a message.

Be a good neighbor

To submit, send an email to community@courant.com or mail to 285 Broad St., Hartford, CT 06115. Good Neighbor is a service by Courant Community. Questions and answers are provided by our readers and are not verified. Medical information cannot be published. Caution should be exercised at all times. The publisher is not responsible for damage to any person or property.

Problem section of I-84, 'Tolland Triangle,' discussed with Rep. Joe Courtney

By Steve Smith
Courant Community

TOLLAND — A section of Interstate Highway 84, mainly that which flows through Tolland, was the topic of discussion at an informal meeting with U.S. Rep. Joe Courtney, on Feb. 15, which included several local municipal and business leaders.

The meeting was organized by the Tolland County Chamber of Commerce and Eric Santini, of Santini Homes. Also present were Sen. Dan Champagne (also mayor of Vernon), State Rep. Tammy Nuccio, Tolland Interim Town Manager Lisa Hancock, and Tolland County Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Melissa Smith.

Representatives from the CT DOT were also invited, but did not attend. Instead, the DOT sent a summation of data, including a study done in 2018 on the area, which is referred to by some locals as the "Tolland Triangle."

A serious accident took place on Dec. 22, in which the driver was taken away via LifeStar. Another accident on Dec. 2 of last year, near Exit 67 in Vernon, took the life of an 11-year-old Vernon Center Middle School student.

Santini said that it seemed to him like accidents happened almost every day during the holiday season last fall, between exits 67 and 69 on I-84, and that prompted him to want to do something. Santini said that, in his opinion, the DOT has made efforts to better control the traffic in that area, but it hasn't done enough.

"There are issues and they've been enhancing the situation with warning signs and guard rails," Santini said. "They recognize the issues, but they say, 'Well, we have other similar issues [elsewhere] like that.' I've driven all of the state and I haven't seen a roller coaster like that."

The topography of the area may be a big part of the prob-



Eastbound I-84 has a sharper "dip" before a steep incline approaching Exit 67. **STEVE SMITH / HARTFORD COURANT**

lem. The highway has a long ascent heading eastbound, then turns right and then left, in an S-curve, as one heads toward Exit 68. Between Exits 68 and 69, the road is straighter, but more hilly. Wind has been suggested as partially to blame, as is black ice and poor visibility at night, because parts of that section are not illuminated.

"They need lights," Champagne said. "It's too dark in that section, and you start getting a little fog and people lose track of the road."

"There are certain areas that ice up quickly," Hancock said, "up between 67 and 68. You get high winds."

"It's the nature of where we are," said Tolland Fire Chief John Littell, adding that his local department responds to accidents on the highway, which is a state road. "It's a wind tunnel between 69, all the way down to 67. You have a different elevation there, and huge elevation drop-offs."

"Every time there's an accident out there, we're calling the town resources to go to this," Nuccio said. "It's a big strain on the town, and the volunteers, and it extends out, because if there's another emergency, who do we send there?"

Besides the accidents themselves, the resulting backups cause other problems, especially when heavy traffic consumes surface roadways in Tolland and Vernon.

"Once we get one accident in there, it gridlocks Vernon and Tolland," Littell said. "There's no

easy way around. Once you block one lane on I-84, it's a disaster - it just backs up and backs up."

According to the DOT report, previous mitigations have included the Connecticut State Police's ability to control signals at intersections, such as the on-ramps in the area, installation of signing at turnaround areas, and replacement of some sections of guard rails.

Proposed enhancements include installation of more hill symbol warning signs, installation and/or replacement of post-mounted delineators, and installation of mile markers every .2 miles, to help with emergency response.

Courtney said that as the state prepares to receive potential federal infrastructure funds, there are a number of projects that are planned, designed, and ready to go that will likely be prioritized - including the Gold Star Bridge between New London and Groton.

"The Gold Star Bridge, which is a failing bridge, you can't drive a heavy truck over it, north-bound," Courtney said. "That's a problem, that needs to get fixed ASAP. It's probably number one."

Courtney said he would back an effort to add lighting and more signage, and suggested another meeting to begin drafting proposals.

"We can do it jointly, to show that there's community support for it," Courtney said. "We've got some to-do items, and I'm happy to flag this to the [DOT] commissioner and the governor. It's a legitimate need."

JRego's, a new restaurant offering a fusion of international flavors, opens

By Susan Dunne
 Hartford Courant

JRego's Gathering Place is the newest restaurant in Ellington, offering the flavors of Mexico, Greece, Italy, China, Brazil and the United States.

"It's an American bistro, but really fusion, with chilaquiles, flatbreads, sesame short ribs. And crepes, sweet-tooth crepes and dinner crepes," says co-owner Jessica Pierson-Regan. "There's something for everybody."

Pierson-Regan, who has worked in events and marketing since the 1990s, co-owns the restaurant and bar with her husband Kevin Regan, who grew up helping with his father's catering business. From 2015 to 2021, he owned Hometown Pizza in Ellington.

JRego's, which opened Jan. 28, is in Meadowview Plaza, where Cold Creek Tavern used to be, a few doors down from Hometown.

"We've always opened our home to everyone. This is an extension of our home," Pierson-Regan said. "I wanted to create a gathering place, where people get together

to enjoy memorable moments and good food."

Providing that food is chef Ricky Sharma of Madison, who also is chef at Turtle Café, a popular breakfast-brunch-lunch spot in Westbrook.

The menu begins with shareables ranging from \$1- to \$16, including mussels, calamari, chicken and waffles, wings, chilaquiles, a Brazilian steak appetizer, sesame ribs, meatballs, Brussels sprouts, sliders and a hummus-feta-pita plate. Flatbreads, from \$10 to \$14, come in pesto-goat cheese-spinach; three-cheese; smoked salmon; and chicken-bacon-cheese. Paninis, at \$11 or \$12, are Cuban, turkey and veggie. Entrees, from \$13 to \$18, are New York strip steak, salmon, chicken, gnocchi and pappardelle.

Crepes — also a specialty at Turtle Café — come in four varieties: wild mushroom, chicken, spinach, asiago, with a lemon herb crème beurre blanc; chicken, chorizo, spinach and cheddar in a cilantro cream sauce; veggie with feta; and Nutella-banana-apple-strawberry-whipped cream.



Pan-seared salmon with parsley gnocchi and sautéed asparagus, topped with black olive caper tapenade at JRego's in Ellington. COURTESY JESSICA PIERSON-REGAN

They range in price from \$13 to \$15. Burgers, salads and sides round out the menu, which also offers a variety of wines and beers.

The 3,000-square-foot space has seating for 94 people, at tables and at the bar. The atmosphere is both mellow — with soft lighting and music — and homey, with one wall covered with photos of Ellington.

JRego's is the third new restau-

rant to come to this small town in the last few months. Backroads Smokin' BBQ, which graduated from a food truck to a brick-and-mortar on Sandy Beach Road; and DiFiore's, an east-of-the-river outpost of the long-running Rocky Hill pasta-sandwich shop, both opened in 2021 to huge popular success.

JRego's Gathering Place is at

175 West Road in Ellington. Hours are Monday to Wednesday 4 to 10 p.m., Thursday to Saturday 4 p.m. to midnight and Sunday 4 to 8 p.m. The restaurant will be open for lunch, too, when staffing is complete. For more information go to jregosgatheringplace.com.

Susan Dunne can be reached at sdunne@courant.com.



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School boards brace for debate over local mask rules

By Don Stacom
Hartford Courant

With only a short time before Connecticut's school mask mandate is expected to expire, local school administrators are hurriedly trying to figure out what to do when the "mask or no mask" decision falls to them.

But with the issue already deeply divisive in many Connecticut communities, most educators were saying nothing publicly.

Many are hoping that state health officials' guidance will bring some resolution, but are acknowledging that town-by-town debates — likely heated in many cases — appear inevitable.

"In many communities the masks have been such a hot issue, the meetings have been contentious. The (school) boards are thinking all those discussions will intensify at the local level even more now," said Patrice McCarthy, deputy director of the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education.

Gov. Ned Lamont's executive order for mandatory masks in all public schools will end Feb. 28.

That would leave each school district free to either drop all mask rules on March 1, adopt their own mandate, or try to fashion some less-restrictive requirements.

Far from resolving the nearly two-year arguments over masks, though, that is likely to make local school board meetings the main arena.

"He puts the onus upon the towns, the schools, the superintendent, but more importantly on the board of education," Norwich school board Chairman Robert



Anti-mask and anti-vaccine protestors gathered outside the state Capitol on the first day of the 2022 legislative session. Schools likely will face heated debate, as Gov. Ned Lamont's executive order for mandatory masks in all public schools ends Feb. 28. **MARK MIRKO/THE HARTFORD COURANT**

Aldi said at a meeting.

Local chapters of the Unmask Our Kids movement were on social media calling for parents to press their school districts against instituting any local mask mandate.

"There is a letter going to the current superintendent and we need support to unmask our kids," Ann Miller Flynn wrote on Facebook's New Milford page. "If you are interested in being part of this, we just need your name and email address to put on the list of parents who support taking the diapers off our kids faces."

And some educators antici-

pate that pro-masks parents and teachers, who've had no objections during the state rules, will become more vocal now.

The overwhelming majority of school systems were holding off on decisions or even public discussion.

Windsor Locks' school board, however, decided that the mandate ends this month. It voted that masks will become optional for its students, staff and teachers starting March 1.

East Hartford education officials made no decision, but signaled they're open to ending mask rules.

"If the statewide mandate is lifted, we intend to follow suit here in East Hartford," said Laura Roberts, the district's communications director.

Bridgeport administrators told News 12 that they'll likely implement a local mandate at least until the end of June, while Trumbull's superintendent said masks will become optional when Lamont's order ends.

The state public health department is expected to give guidance on how school systems should proceed.

Many educators want a system

of benchmarks based on community infection rates and vaccination rates, and perhaps even a formula that factors in the air-circulation capability of each school or the space available for social distancing.

Until then, they say, they're unwilling to commit either way. Privately, they also acknowledge concern about angering parent groups, student organizations or union factions on opposing sides of the issue.

So most school systems said nothing.

"At this time, we've decided it is too premature to make any comments," said Stan Simpson, the communications director for Bloomfield schools.

"We won't be making any public statements until the legislature takes action and the DPH provides the guidelines that they've promised," said Wolcott Superintendent Tony Gasper.

Other districts including Farmington, Region 10, Winsted, Enfield and Thomaston simply didn't respond to questions.

Middletown acting Superintendent Alberto Vázquez Matos said he and Mayor Ben Florsheim will work together with the Middletown Health Department to determine the metrics they'll use for a decision.

At its regular meeting, Norwich's school board concluded it would have to convene a special meeting to reach a decision.

But even then there were signs of debate ahead. One member began enthusiastically talking about studies concerning natural immunity; the chairman cut her off, advising her to wait for the special session.



Esmeralda is a spunky 3 year old girl! She was rescued from a rough situation living outside, and is learning how people work. As time has gone in she has become so curious, and seeks out attention. She loves to entice you over by rolling around belly up, and when you approach, she will give you a sassy hiss and then wants you to play! Esmeralda would be a great, fun companion for an experienced cat lover that can pick up on her cues.

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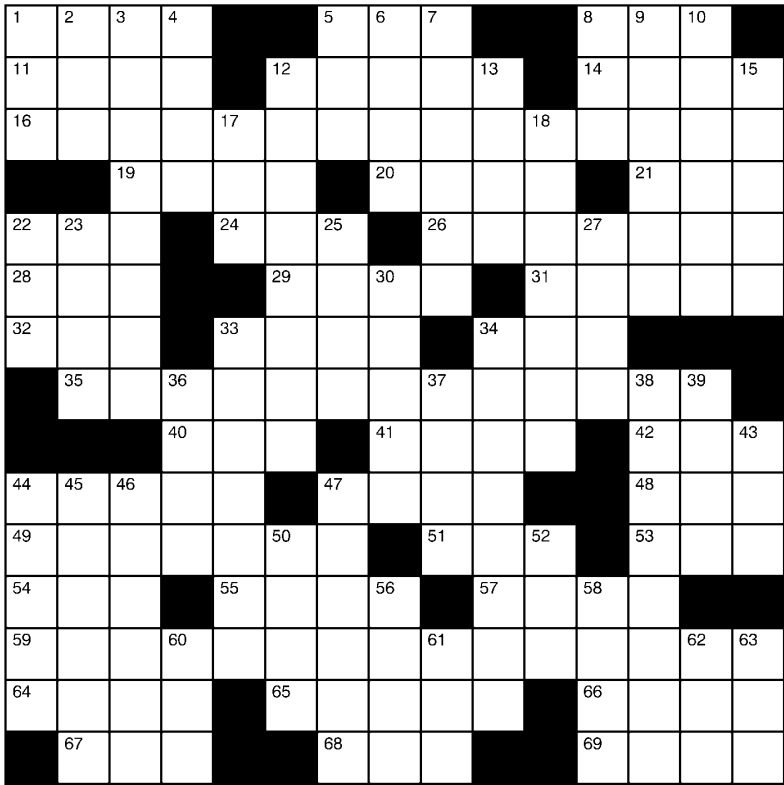
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By Charles Preston

ACROSS

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- 5 Dye variety
- 8 Pol. radio call
- 11 *The Egg* ____
- 12 Bridge suit
- 14 Nonsense
- 16 The March King
- 19 He, to Luciano
- 20 Home of the Jazz
- 21 Campaigned
- 22 Bro's kin
- 24 High peak
- 26 Rich green
- 28 Sash for Cio-cio-san
- 29 Ill-tempered
- 31 Cheerful tunes
- 32 Ms. Ullmann
- 33 *Moses und* ____
- 34 Mrs. Miles Archer
- 35 March by 16 Across
- 40 Long, long time
- 41 The ____ of March
- 42 Kind of rule
- 44 Garrote
- 47 Anna who played Nana
- 48 Expert
- 49 Most lax
- 51 Downed

- 53 Reed or Stout

- 54 Giant of note
- 55 NC campus
- 57 Classic villain
- 59 ____ *Forever*: march by 16 Across
- 64 Israeli dance
- 65 Soft
- 66 Change the decor
- 67 Louis or Carrie
- 68 It's often the limit
- 69 Attract

DOWN

- 1 ____ Mahal
- 2 Composer Brian
- 3 Stickum
- 4 March, with 45 Down
- 5 ____ Baba
- 6 Bantu
- 7 ____ *dictum*
- 8 Cameroon peoples
- 9 Not singular
- 10 Volcanic rock
- 12 Tots
- 13 WWII delicacy
- 15 ____ *Across the Sea*
- 17 Philippine rebel gp.
- 18 Tables
- 22 Fa follower
- 23 Nile bird

- 25 Needy

- 27 Coin of Iran
- 30 In need of training
- 33 Orbital points
- 34 Sameness
- 36 "Oh, lift ____ a wave": Shelley
- 37 Notion
- 38 Awry
- 39 Piqued
- 43 Spar
- 44 Wade through mud
- 45 See 4 Down
- 46 Gyration
- 47 Rolling ____
- 50 Bridge coup
- 52 Corn unit
- 56 Flickertail St.
- 58 Encircle
- 60 *Norma* ____
- 61 Stallone, to friends
- 62 Ms. LeShan
- 63 Piglet's mom

Community News

from Page 4

senior, a child of a senior, or just want to know more. Register online at www.windsorlockslibrary.org/programs or call 860-627-1495.

Kent Memorial Library announces new hours

SUFFIELD — Kent Memorial Library, 50 North Main St., updated its hours, effective immediately. New hours are Monday through Thursday from 10 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. and Friday and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Call 860-668-3896 for more information.

Windsor Food & Fuel Bank elects new president, officers

WINDSOR — Joanna Gould, the Deposit & Electronic Services Support Officer at Windsor Federal Savings, was recently elected as the president of the Windsor Food & Fuel Bank. She replaces former president Ernest Perreault who retired after serving in that position since 2016.

At its January meeting, the Board of Directors of the Windsor Food & Fuel Bank also elected the 2022 officers who all are Windsor residents. They are: President Joanna Gould; 1st Vice President Denise Novak; 2nd Vice President Laura Soll-Broxterman; Treasurer Nike Agman; and Secretary Marlene Towers.

"I am very honored to serve as president of this dynamic nonprofit organization and work with a dedicated group of volunteer Board members and Windsor Social Services staff as we continue to meet the needs of residents during this challenging time," said Gould. "We are immensely grateful to the hundreds of Windsor residents and businesses who have contributed to the Windsor Food & Fuel Bank by donating funds, products and other volunteer hours — especially during our recent Annual Appeal. We are fortunate to live in Windsor — a place where people really care about each other — particularly during the past two years," she adds. "We look forward to the future and to helping even more of our neighbors if they need support."

Gould has worked in the banking industry for more than 15 years, and joined Windsor Federal Savings in 2015. She has served on the Windsor Food & Fuel Bank Board as Treasurer for six years, and has been involved with much of the organiza-

tion's community efforts and outreach. A member of the Windsor Junior Woman's Club, Gould is involved in fundraisers for local charities on behalf of that organization and of Windsor Federal that include Foodshare's Walk Against Hunger and the Windsor Shad Derby. She has a Bachelor's degree in Pure and Applied Mathematics from Boston University.

The Windsor Food & Fuel Bank is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that was founded in 1967 as the Windsor Community Service Council (WCSC). The all-volunteer Board, along with its partners at Windsor Social Services, works to accomplish the mission of ensuring that no Windsor resident goes hungry, is cold, or is without basic necessities.

If you are a Windsor resident and not a current client of the Windsor Food & Fuel Bank but find yourself in need of food assistance, visit www.townofwindsorct.com/social-services or www.windsorfoodbank.org or call the Windsor Social Services office at 860-285-1839.

Bloomfield Library celebrating Women's History Month

BLOOMFIELD — The Bloomfield Public Library celebrates Women's History Month this March with a variety of virtual programs for all ages. For adults, the library will kick off the month-long celebration by welcoming author and cartoonist Em Sauter to present "The Queen of Beer" at 6:30 p.m. March 1. Learn about ancient and medieval brewing practices and how women were (and still are) the queens of beer.

For children, Miss Heidi will share a read-along of *Wilma Unlimited: How Wilma Rudolph Became the World's Fastest Woman*, a story about a polio survivor turned Olympic athlete. Find the recording on the library YouTube channel starting March 7, along with an archive of previously recorded programs.

Attention high school teens: BPL is launching an interactive, multimedia Teen Book Discussion based on the All CT Reads selections. Join on March 15 at 4 p.m., as they partner with the West Hartford Public Library, to discuss *One of the Great Ones* by Maika and Maritza Moulite. The first 10 teens to register will receive a free copy of the book, along with their own snacks.

Other highlights include a women artists tour with the Wadsworth Atheneum, CT Women's Hall of Fame presentations, women in computer science, and information about free health screenings for early prevention.

LOCAL NEWS

Visit bplct.org and click "Event Calendar" to see the full list of programs and to register.

Enfield Library hosting PJ storytime, Bingo night

ENFIELD — The Enfield Public Library, 104 Middle Road, is hosting the following events. Visit www.enfieldpubliclibrary.org or call 860-763-7518 or 860-763-7512 for more information.

PJ storytime will take place on Thursday, March 3, at 6:30 p.m. PJs are proper attire. Bring along Mom and Dad and your favorite stuffed animal. The recommended age for this storytime is three to seven.

Family bingo night will take place on Friday, March 4, at 6:30 p.m. Have fun and win prizes at this free drop-in program. The front lobby doors open at 6 p.m. The library closes at 5 p.m.

Domestic Abuse Agency program taking place

VERNON — STAFFORD SPRINGS — The Women's Ministry Group of First United Methodist Church, 8 Church St., invites adults to a presentation from the Domestic Abuse Agency.

Learn what the agency has to offer in programs for children, teens, and people of all ages. The program will take place from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. Saturday, March 5. Light refreshments will be offered. Call 860-684-2468 with questions.

Glastonbury Centennial Lions Club hosting pasta dinner

GLASTONBURY — The Glastonbury Centennial Lions Club is holding a curbside pick-up pasta dinner from 5.30 to 7.30 p.m. Saturday, May 7, at First Church of Christ, 2183 Main St.

The menu features pasta with homemade Bolognese sauce, Caesar salad and a dinner roll prepared and donated by Salad Bar Glastonbury, and a chocolate brownie. The cost is \$10 per meal. Tickets must be purchased in advance.

A portion of proceeds will fund the Glastonbury Centennial Lions Club scholarship for student residents in Glastonbury. Email GlastonburyLions@yahoo.com to purchase tickets. For more details, call President Christine Kurtz at 860-597-3530.

Those who cannot attend but still want to support the Lions may donate a meal to emergency first responders. Club members will deliver the meal.

South Congregational Church presents Lenten Prayer Cross

EAST HARTFORD — South Congregational Church invites the community to stop at the Lenten Prayer Cross displayed on their front lawn at 1301 Forbes St. Call 860-568-5150 or visit southucc.org for more information.

Members, strangers and friends are welcome to visit the cross, offer a prayer, and tie a ribbon to the structure as a visual representation of their Lenten journey.

People may bring their own ribbon or choose one from a basket of donations. All are welcome to participate in this transformational activity of renewal, sacrifice, fellowship and hope. The cross will be in place from Ash Wednesday, March 2, through Easter Sunday, April 17.

Brunetti accepting applications for scholarships

EAST HARTFORD — Johnson Brunetti Retirement & Investment Specialists is seeking graduating seniors from East Hartford High School (Class of 2022) who have been actively involved in community service and plan to attend a Connecticut state college or university (including community college and UConn) to apply for the Johnson Brunetti Scholarship for Community Service.

Scholarship recipients will each be awarded \$1,500 to be used to support their education. The deadline to apply is Friday, April 15.

Visit johnsonbrunetti.com/scholarships for more information, including the required criteria and Scholarship Application Form.

Check 'Em Out Book Club meeting at library

MANCHESTER — The Check 'Em Out Book Club at Manchester Public Library, 586 Main St., will meet in-person at 6:30 p.m. Monday, March 14.

The club will discuss The Women's March by Jennifer Chiaverini. Copies of the book are available for checkout at both library buildings. No registration is required for this free in-person program. For more information, visit <http://library.townofmanchester.org> or call the library at 860-645-0821.

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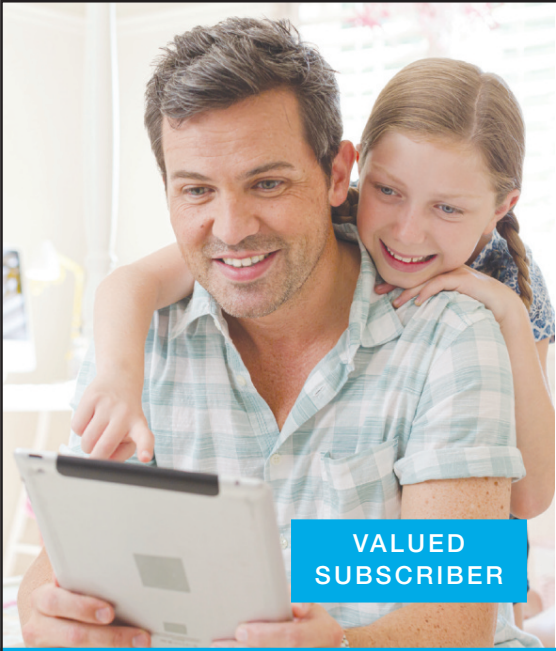
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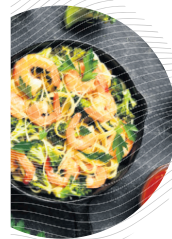
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In a stable of one

By William Heald
Special to Courant Community

One pretty much never associates pickup trucks with fuel efficiency, but then the segment has been full of surprises the last few years (and Ford has often been the instigator of such surprises).

In 2021 the company introduced a true full hybrid pickup (the F 150 Hybrid), and now they've come up with what I believe to be an even more significant truck; a compact that gets the type of mileage a hybrid car is typically known for. But this is a four-door pickup, a machine ideal for all kinds of tasks from carrying supplies around the home- stead to working as a delivery vehicle.

The compact pickup class (before it grew into the midsize pickup class) featured the type of efficient, useful workhorses that helped out millions of businesses, and in a way the Maverick, as Ford calls their new truck, may just herald the return of this type of useful vehicle. As always, the marketplace will determine if this bold new venture will succeed but don't be surprised if we see some competition from the other manufac- turers quite soon.

The name Maverick is no stranger to Ford, as they sold a compact car with this title in the 1970s. This newbie has two primary versions; a non-hybrid version with either front-wheel or all-wheel-drive or the hybrid version in front-drive only. Unlike the compact pickups of the past, the Maverick dispenses with body-on-frame construction and goes with a unibody chassis.

The two drivetrains include a 2-liter Ecoboost Inline Four with 270 horsepower,

and a hybrid unit combining a 2.5-liter Inline Four with an electric motor for a total output of 191 horsepower. This drivetrain has Ford's PowerSplit electronic continuously variable transmission, while the EcoBoost gets an 8-speed automatic. Our test Maverick was a hybrid in the Lariat trim, and the drivetrain proved quite adequate to push the little pony along nicely.

Ford claims a 1,500-pound payload; quite impressive for such a small truck (although the bed is pretty wee compared to the midsize class). The towing capacity is 2,000 pounds, also not bad for a little fellah. The rear "twist beam" suspension is non-inde- pendent but the ride is perfectly accept- able, and while the front-drive architecture isn't the best for pulling heavy loads uphill in slippery conditions, it should work fine for around-town chores and deliveries. The diminutive size makes it great for whipping around in city traffic.

The four-door cab in our Lariat was a cozy but perfectly accommodating affair, with narrow but supportive seating sheathed in a leather-like material called Activex. The front seats are heated, and the rear seats are acceptably roomy for two adults (and the seat bottoms fold up to access storage bins). The pickup bed is loaded with innovative cutouts to maximize cargo configurations, although the tailgate is not dampened when lowered (an oversight compared to larger pickups).

The 2022 Ford Maverick Lariat FWD Hybrid is EPA rated 42 MPG city/33 high- way. Pricing on this unit wasn't available, but Ford says the Maverick starts at \$19,995. www.ford.com



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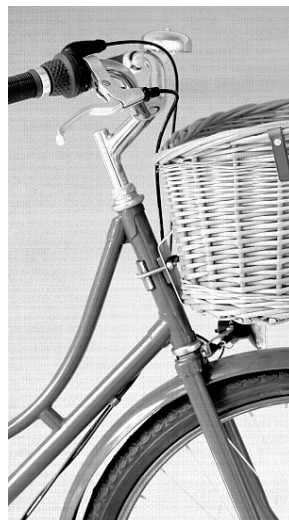
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4 top tech innovations from CES 2022 to make your life better

(BPT) - Every year, groundbreaking innovations premiere at the Consumer Technology Association's CES conference in Las Vegas, showcasing consumer

technology products that aren't just the latest trends, but can make a real difference in your life.

And 2022 is even more exciting than previous years, highlighting products that address today's needs and desires to enhance your home life.

For example, LG Electronics is unveiling breakthrough technology in home appliances and home entertainment at CES again this year. Here are four new products from LG that will make a big impact on your daily life.

- 1. Take a deep breath**

As cleanliness is top of mind, the LG PuriCare AeroTower Air Purifying Fan combines the benefits of an air purifier with the comfort and functionality of a cooling fan and heater - all within a streamlined, stylish design created for all living spaces.

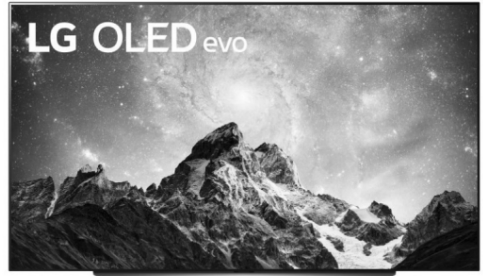
The AeroTower delivers year-round air purification with three modes of 360-degree air flow so users can enjoy cleaner, more comfortable air that is whisper quiet. With its innovative "Air Valley" technology, the AeroTower creates a powerful airflow that closely resembles a soothing, natural breeze for customized, whole-room purification. Its UVnano technology kills bacteria, while its True HEPA Filtration system captures 99.97% of six different particles for even cleaner, purer air.
- 2. Level up your home theater**

LG's critically-acclaimed LG OLED TVs keep pushing the envelope year after year. For movie buffs, sports fans and avid gamers alike, the 2022 LG OLED C2 Series will optimize your viewing experience with critically-acclaimed picture quality that delivers realistic images, perfect blacks and rich colors along with lifelike sound and advanced AI features. LG's new a9 Gen 5 AI processor and cutting-edge AI technologies combine to optimize your picture quality for your preferred entertainment genres. The TVs 120fps Hi Frame Rate delivers your favorite fast-paced content - like sports or video games - with more dynamic, realistic imagery.

The LG Magic Remote connects you to built-in voice assistants including Amazon Alexa and the Google Assistant and many of the most popular streaming services so you're always just a press or voice command away from your favorite services. The C2 series boasts razor-thin bezels around the screen, with a sleek design allowing it to mount closer to the wall. Compatibility with HDMI standards allows you to connect it to external devices like gaming consoles and Sound Bars for a complete viewing experience.
- 3. Surround yourself with life-like sound**

And if you really want to create the most immersive home theater or gaming room experience, pair your LG OLED TV with the new LG S95QR Soundbar. With its perfectly balanced high-quality sound, this sound bar introduces a world's first upward-firing center channel for clearer audio, and its speaker unit configuration maximizes multi-directional sound projection. The speakers on each side of the soundbar are angled toward the front, and the new six-channel rear speaker layout helps optimize the surround sound effect for the best multi-dimensional, cinema-quality audio. The innovative AI Sound Pro mode also brings content-optimized audio so you can experience powerful, immersive sound effects for enhancing action movies or video games.
- 4. Washing dishes will never be the same**

Let's face it, nobody likes doing dishes, especially after an evening at home with family and friends. Fortunately, LG's latest dishwasher innovation - the Wi-Fi Enabled Top Control Dishwasher with QuadWash Pro and Dynamic Heat Dry - offers the ultimate cleaning experience, delivering superior clean in just one hour while eliminating the wasteful need to pre-rinse. TrueSteam penetrates caked-on foods at the start of the cycle, and QuadWash Pro technology uses high-pressure jets to power-clean from multiple angles while soaking dishes with micro bubble-infused water to break down heavy soiling. Steam during the drying cycle and Dynamic Heat Dry improves the drying process, resulting in sparkling dishes and glassware.



Love to entertain or have a large family? The adjustable third rack offers more space, to save time and water by washing fewer loads. The dishwasher also uses the latest technology by connecting to LG's ThinQ, to help you stay on top of household chores by operating remotely and using AI to automatically order dishwasher detergent before you run out.

Check out all the ways the latest technology can improve your everyday life at LG.com.

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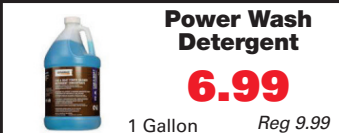


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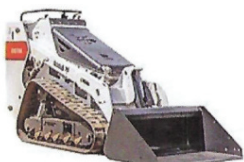
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